

Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport

Supplementary Budget Estimates 16 October 2012

Question: 30

Topic: Norfolk Island Services

Asked By: Senator BACK

Type of Question: RRA&T 114

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 December 2012

Number of pages: 1

Senator BACK: Without taking more of your time this evening, I would be most interested if you would take on notice a comparator of the sorts of services that Australian citizens would expect on mainland Australia, including Tasmania, and how they would compare or contrast with those same services on Norfolk Island—I am thinking of Medicare, the PBS, family and children's services, law. I do not want to take up your time now, but I would be very interested to see a table from which we could get an understanding of the comparative quality of services that are delivered.

Answer:

There are no specific metrics that compare quality of services on Norfolk Island to what Australian citizens would expect on mainland Australia, including Tasmania. In December 2011, the Commonwealth Grants Commission staff released an update to the 2006 Commonwealth Grants Commission Report into the Financial Capacity of Norfolk Island. The Report looked at levels of spending and revenue raising in comparable communities. The Report includes tables of comparison on State and local government average expense per capita for State and local government services and what Norfolk Island actually spends. Comparable services include, but are not limited to, education; health expenses, health user charges, welfare and public housing, and law and order.

The Update of the Financial Capacity of Norfolk Island 2011 can be found at the Commonwealth Grants Commission website: www.cgc.gov.au .

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Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport

Supplementary Budget Estimates 16 October 2012

Question: 31

Topic: Current Mining Lease on Christmas Island

Asked By: Senator MACDONALD

Type of Question: RRA&T 117

Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 7 December 2012

Number of pages: 1

Senator IAN MACDONALD: ...Anyhow, were you going to get back to me on the timelines for the forward steps for the application by the phosphate company?

Ms Beauchamp: We can do that.

Mr Yates: This is to take on notice a question about the work we are doing on the current mining lease?

Senator IAN MACDONALD: Yes.

Answer:

The Department is working closely with senior representatives of Phosphate Resources Limited (PRL) and with the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) regarding the renegotiation of the current mining lease. The Department held meetings recently with both SEWPaC and PRL to progress negotiations and aims to execute a revised lease by the end of the year.